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Indiana Department of Labor



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor Gives Awards to Greater Elkhart Chamber and Safety Chairperson

West Lafayette, IN – The Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce and Ron Cook, chairperson of the Chamber's OSHA Council, were presented with the Governor's Workplace Safety Award at the Hoosier Safety Council's 17th Annual State Safety and Health Conference in West Lafayette. The Governor's Workplace Safety Awards recognize the most innovative safety and health initiatives among Indiana's workplaces. The selection process for the awards is very competitive and only three awards were given this year.

The Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce was given the award for education and outreach related to its nearly 30 years of work promoting workplace safety and health in the region. The Chamber's standard activities are highlighted by the participation of over 70 area employers in monthly safety presentations and safety training workshops, which have been used as models by other organizations statewide.

Mr. Cook, a 20 plus year volunteer of Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce, was the chief architect behind the Chamber's success and was given an individual award for his education and outreach achievements.

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Commissioner of Labor Nancy J. Guyott, who presented the awards on behalf of the governor, noted, "The Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce and Mr. Cook have worked to dramatically improve the working conditions for the people they touched, and have set the benchmarks for other communities to follow. I applaud it for its commitment to workplace safety."

"The Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce is pleased and honored to be recognized for its ongoing commitment to the safety and health of the workers of north central Indiana," said Phil Penn, president of the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce. "The concentration of manufacturing in this area of the state along with the entrepreneurial nature of our industries created a need that the Chamber and its members were pleased to respond to. We thank all of our members, volunteers, BuSET professionals and our local communities for contributing to our success in this educational outreach," continued Penn. "We particularly would like to recognize the contribution of our OSHA Council Co-Chairperson, Ron Crook, who for over 20 years has helped direct the Council activity and who is also being recognized, independently, with a Governor's Workplace Safety Award."

In response to being given the individual award, Mr. Cook stated, "I can think of no greater honor in the safety profession than being awarded the Governor's Workplace Safety Award. I have had the extreme pleasure of working with the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Indiana Department of Labor's Bureau of Safety Education and Training, for more than 20 years to help to make Indiana's workplaces safer. This is an honor I will cherish forever."

In addition to those awards presented to Mr. Cook and the Greater Elkhart Chamber of Commerce, the Indianapolis Zoological Society, Inc. also won an award for education and outreach related to its innovative approach to infusing fun into its safety and health education programs for employees, volunteers, and visitors and the broad scope of its concerns for safety and health of its employees even beyond workplace issue.